

## Alcohol Awareness Month

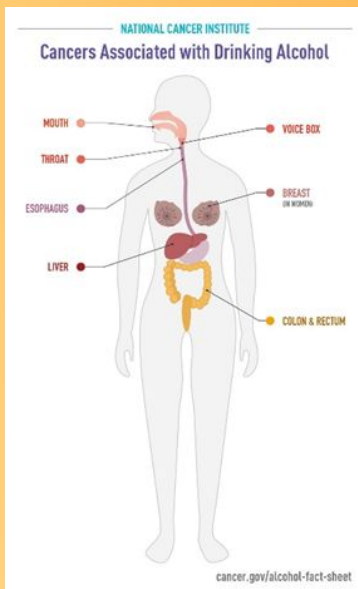
### Did you know?

Alcohol misuse is widely underdiagnosed and undertreated due to many factors with a main one being patient denial.

- Such a high prevalence of drinking helps normalize unhealthy drinking patterns, amplifying the public health impact.

Binge drinking is the most common and costly pattern of excessive alcohol use in the United States. Binge drinking is defined as consuming 5 or more drinks on one occasion for men or 4 or more drinks on one occasion for women.

- Most people who binge drink are not dependent on alcohol.
- One in six US adults binge drink, with 25% doing so at least weekly.



Excessive drinking, including binge drinking, cost the United States \$249 billion in 2010, or \$2.05 per drink. These costs were from lost work productivity, health care expenditures, criminal justice costs, and other expenses. Binge drinking accounted for 77% of these costs, equal to \$191 billion.

The DSM–5 integrates the two DSM–IV disorders, alcohol abuse and alcohol dependence, into a single disorder called alcohol use disorder (AUD) with mild, moderate, and severe sub-classifications

### Physiologic effects of chronic alcohol use include the following:

- **Gastrointestinal** - Cirrhosis of the liver, peptic ulcer disease, gastritis, pancreatitis, and carcinoma
- **Cardiovascular** - Hypertension, cardiomyopathy, atrial fibrillation ("holiday heart syndrome")
- **Neurological** - Peripheral neuropathy leading to ataxia, Wernicke encephalopathy, Korsakoff psychosis, and structural changes in the brain leading to dementia
- **Immunologic** - Suppression of neutrophil function and cell-mediated immunity
- **Endocrine** - In males, increase in estrogen and decrease in testosterone, leading to impotence, testicular atrophy, and gynecomastia
- **Obstetric** - Fetal alcohol syndrome (i.e. intellectual disability, facial deformity, other neurologic problems)
- **Psychiatric** - Depression or anxiety disorders
- **Cancer** - Increased risk for head and neck, esophageal, liver, breast, and colorectal cancers

# Resources We Can Use as Providers

## Wellness Challenge:

It is not uncommon for patients to underreport their alcohol consumption and downplay the number of drinks they are consuming. As future practitioners, it is important for us to be mindful of our own consumption. If we are unable to, how can we expect patients to?

**Challenge yourself to think retrospectively or keep track of your alcohol use this month to become self-aware of your own consumption and habits of drinking.**

## SAMHSA's National Helpline:

It's a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

**1-800-662-HELP (4357)**



This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.

***“The mentality and behavior of drug addicts and alcoholics is wholly irrational until you understand that they are completely powerless over their addiction and unless they have structured help, they have no hope.” – Russell Brand***

## Resources to Further your Education

**What does alcohol do to your brain?**

<https://youtu.be/CJynHWYo7D8?si=Aa4aCjh3suKTc5xI>

**What is alcoholism?**

[https://youtu.be/e5DxD6Tuxw?si=9Pnz7MhOOdnH\\_Ajf](https://youtu.be/e5DxD6Tuxw?si=9Pnz7MhOOdnH_Ajf)

AUDIT-C				
Please circle the answer that is correct for you.				
<b>1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?</b>				<b>SCORE</b>
Never (0)	Monthly or less (1)	Two to four times a month (2)	Two to three times per week (3)	Four or more times a week (4)
<b>2. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?</b>				
1 or 2 (0)	3 or 4 (1)	5 or 6 (2)	7 to 9 (3)	10 or more (4)
<b>3. How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?</b>				
Never (0)	Less than Monthly (1)	Monthly (2)	Two to three times per week (3)	Four or more times a week (4)
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b> Add the number for each question to get your total score.				
Maximum score is 12. A score of $\geq 4$ identifies 86% of men who report drinking above recommended levels or meets criteria for alcohol use disorders. A score of $> 2$ identifies 84% of women who report hazardous drinking or alcohol use disorders.				

CAGE Questionnaire for Detecting Alcoholism		
Question	Yes	No
C: Have you ever felt you should <b>C</b> ut down on your drinking?	1	0
A: Have people <b>A</b> nnoyed you by criticizing your drinking?	1	0
G: Have you ever felt <b>G</b> uilty about your drinking?	1	0
E: Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning ( <b>E</b> ye opener)?	1	0
A total score of 0 or 1 suggests low risk of problem drinking A total score of 2 or 3 indicates high suspicion for alcoholism A total score of 4 is virtually diagnostic for alcoholism		

## April is also National Stress Month!

- The month of April is dedicated to bringing awareness to the negative impact stress can have.
  - The *NIH* recognizes managing stress as one of the essentials to leading a healthy life.
- Some things the *NIH* suggests to reduce stress include sticking to a sleep routine, avoiding excessive amounts of caffeine, and/or keeping a journal.

To learn some tips on how to manage stress, check out the link below:

<https://orwh.od.nih.gov/in-the-spotlight/all-articles/7-steps-manage-stress-and-build-resilience>

See you next month for more DEI topics!

## Other Sources We Used...

<https://hr.nih.gov/working-nih/civil/national-stress-awareness-month#:~:text=April%20is%20recognized%20as%20National,component%20of%20a%20healthy%20lifestyle.>

<https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/805084-overview>

<https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/alcohol-use-disorder-comparison-between-dsm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/alcohol/index.htm>

<https://americanaddictioncenters.org/alcohol/signs-symptoms>

[https://www.uptodate.com/contents/risky-drinking-and-alcohol-use-disorder-epidemiology-clinical-features-adverse-consequences-screening-and-assessment?search=alcohol&source=search\\_result&selectedTitle=3%7E150&usage\\_type=default&display\\_rank=3](https://www.uptodate.com/contents/risky-drinking-and-alcohol-use-disorder-epidemiology-clinical-features-adverse-consequences-screening-and-assessment?search=alcohol&source=search_result&selectedTitle=3%7E150&usage_type=default&display_rank=3)

<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/alcohol/alcohol-fact-sheet>

<https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/805084-overview>

Nutt D, Hayes A, Fonville L, et al. Alcohol and the Brain. *Nutrients*. 2021;13(11):3938. Published 2021 Nov 4. doi:10.3390/nu13113938